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or gills, and when in the water that it has free access to them.”\* In short, like Tantalus, the fish is surrounded by an element replete with life, yet eluding its panting efforts to sip the renovating stream, more fortunate than he, its agony is brief, and quickly it sinks into the repose of death.

J. E. P.

PERSONAL SKETCH—REV. ROBERT STEPHENSON CROOKE.†

Some philosophers have conceived that the admiration which we naturally bestow upon the imitative arts, is not yielded, in any degree, to the specimens considered in themselves, but is exclusively directed to the *mind*, which is associated with their production. It is the abiding consciousness of the artist's skill which gives its pleasure to the contemplation of his works. Plain people like ourselves, who boast no great astuteness in analysing their feelings—and who think the individual metaphysically mad, who, instead of enjoying his pleasurable emotions, wantonly destroys them, by setting about an investigation of their causes—cannot reasonably be expected to know much respecting a matter so abstruse as this. If, however, there be any truth in the theory, it will serve in some degree to vindicate a taste of ours, which might seem obnoxious to the censure of a connoisseur. Though we appreciate intellect, as employed upon the block of marble or the piece of canvass, we have a higher relish for it when at work with words, its more natural and effective instrument. Mind, in the former instances, may be the ultimate power by which our feelings are aroused—but it is placed far away in dimness and obscurity. We better like to see its clear proportions, and come as close to it as possible. We are not fond of being electrified through a chain of associations; we would rather place our hand at once upon the prime conductor. Under these circumstances, we find that oratory excites an interest which no other manifestation of intellect has the power of producing. We witness the speaker throwing himself and

\* This argument becomes irresistible, when we follow M. Flourens to the further proof, that even in water if the folds of the gills be prevented by artificial means from dilating, the result is the same as in air, namely, decrease of strength, and death.

† This Rev. Gentleman, we are informed, was a passenger on board the *Moirs*, during her fatal passage from Liverpool to Dublin; and in the awful hour of danger performed an act highly creditable to his humanity. When preparing to commit himself to the waves, he observed a very beautiful lady standing upon that part of the deck which lay deepest in the water. Already the sea had reached her neck; and a few moments would have placed her beyond the hope of help. Mr. Crooke instantly proceeded towards her, and leading her to a portion of the vessel which still stood high above the flood, by the aid of a fellow-passenger, secured her to some of the upper works. His assistant in this generous act, who had lately returned from the West Indies, and had passed through many scenes of similar danger, desired the subject of our sketch to strip, and in all respects to follow his example—in which, he said, lay his best chance of ultimate safety. They parted from the vessel; and Mr. Crooke, watching the motions of his companion, perceived that when an opposing wave came, he dived beneath it—and when it receded towards the shore, he committed himself entirely to its impulse. This example he followed so long as he possessed strength to do so; and, when nearly exhausted, seized upon a hen-coop which providentially lay near him, and clung by it until, after many hours, he was picked up by a boat which had been sent out to the assistance of such passengers as might have possibly escaped. The gentleman to whose directions Mr. Crooke's preservation may in a great degree be attributed, perished; but the lady who had been the object of their humanity, was extricated from her perilous situation, and, we believe, still lives.

his subject into his hearers' hearts, and dragging their emotions captive at his chariot wheels, with a more burning interest than any sculpture or painting could generate within us, though the one were the boldest into which Michael Angelo ever dashed his soul, and the other the most exquisite that his illustrious pupil, Raphael, ever made immortal.

The pulpit is rapidly refuting the antiquated libels with which it is occasionally maligned. Those persons who speak about the dull somnific tendency of preaching, have derived the accusation from the state of things which obtained in these countries, before the trumpet of Wesley broke the slumbers of the church. Sermons, formerly mere cold, calm, composing essays, have in most instances risen into speeches of a spirit-stirring energy. Let us not outrage ears polite, when we say that this advantageous alteration—for such we sincerely consider it—is attributable to methodism in despite of its vulgarity, and that the sonorous voice of Whitfield, uplifted on some far hill side, and awing into "silence deep as death," the rustic throng that hung upon his every accent—improved the lungs and animated the delivery of the divine who addressed his aristocratic audience in the gorgeous cathedral. The slumbering incumbents who formerly occupied the throne of taste have abdicated in favour of their more energetic competitors; and the public, we think, have been benefited by the change of dynasty. From the very beginning the new style of preaching produced powerful effects—effects increased prodigiously by its novelty. Who is the most celebrated preacher in the annals of the Established Church in Dublin? All old people, and most young ones, will instantly reply, Dean Kirwan. But the reputation of this divine is almost exclusively traditionary. Let a person accustomed to the general cast of preaching prevalent at the present day, read one of his discourses, and he can hardly fail to be amazed at its wonderful success. But the truth is, that Kirwan burst upon the public with a vehemence for which they were altogether unprepared; and to this circumstance he is indebted for his reputation. In the language of Grattan, "he came to interrupt the repose of the pulpit, and shake one world with the thunder of the other." To this circumstance, and not to any overwhelming force of genius—which we apprehend he did not possess—are to be attributed the contributions of one thousand or twelve hundred pounds, which he very frequently extracted, together with the purses, watches, jewels, &c. heaped upon the plate.

The Reverend Gentleman, whose name we have prefixed, is one of the most favourable specimens of the popular style of preaching which we could select, just now, in Dublin, and we have, therefore, determined to make him the subject of a few observations. The circumstances of the pulpit orator seem to render him, in some degree, an unfit subject for a sketch. The comparatively extemporaneous deportment and effusions of the senate and bar, enable you to catch occasionally the peculiarities of character as well as of talents, by which their members may chance to be distinguished. But when the preacher puts on his gown and band, he almost necessarily lays aside most of those eccentricities which give individuality and interest to portraits of this description. We shall endeavour, notwithstanding, to give our readers some idea of this popular divine, adverting occasionally, by way of illustration, to some of his clerical contemporaries. If it shall be said, that we should rather cast our eyes in compunction to the earth, than raise them in criticism to the pulpit—in the exercise of that candour which anonymous writers have few temptations to transgress, we shall not be forward to deny altogether the justice of the observation. At the same time, we

must remark, that we shall not willingly lose sight of the respect to which the minister and the man are equally entitled.

Mr. Crooke stately officiates in the chapel of the Lying-in-Hospital; but we heard him for the first time in St. Anne's church. It was a charity sermon in aid of the Clermont institution, for the support and education of the deaf and dumb. Now a charity sermon, as it appears to us, is a very dangerous undertaking. The unexampled triteness of the subject—the danger of merging the dignity of the preacher in the importunity of the advocate—the pecuniary complexion which his divinity almost necessarily assumes—and the disposition on the part of his audience to consider the discourse as a mere inoperative prelude to the premeditated contribution—are difficulties which it requires unusual powers to surmount. Conscientious feelings, and perhaps the perception of these obstacles, have of late considerably changed the mode of sermonising for charitable purposes. Instead of preaching exclusively at the lucre, and racking their ingenuity in barefaced endeavours to pick the pockets of their hearers—instead of pictures of distress, which had long descended as heir-looms in the church, and which, truth to say, were often miserable daubs—many modern preachers are in the habit of giving sermons, as unconnected with the charity which they advocate, as with the text from which they start, and abandon to a wearied word or two at the conclusion, the interests of a deserving institution. This principle, we think, is frequently carried too far. The excesses of the ancient system were doubtless to be avoided, but they may be equalled by an injudicious adherence to the opposite extreme—

“ ————— Sunt certi denique fines,  
Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum.”

Mr. Crooke kept within the debatable land on both extremities. “Without God and without hope in the world,” was the text which he selected. He turned at once to the object of his appeal, and, in a few sentences, showed how applicable was this passage to the situation of the deaf mute. We feared, at first, that he was about to get too soon into the petitory portion of his subject; but the result evinced that we had anticipated erroneously, and that the preacher knew his business much better than we did. After having fixed upon the minds of his audience this leading application of his text, he proceeded to treat it with that extensiveness of which it is susceptible; but so judiciously were the various topics introduced, that their ultimate bearing upon the case of the deaf and dumb, was never placed completely out of sight. Had the preacher commenced by handling the subject generally, his hearers could not have discerned that secondary reference to the object of his discourse, which it was advisable to keep in view. Had he refrained from treating the subject generally at all, he would have neglected many striking considerations, which added greatly both to the eloquence and edification of the sermon. As it was, his arrangement evidenced the soundest possible discretion, and kept continually before us the necessity of enabling his unfortunate clients to receive “the understanding heart instead of the hearing ear.” With what felicity did he illustrate the destitution of all who live “without God in the world!” He alluded to the darkness which sits upon the heathen lands, and to the golden image which attracts the worldling's unsanctified devotion. He bade us look to the “Author and Finisher of our Faith,” if we desired to know what it was to be without God—that this it was, and not sin, which constituted his anguish, when his soul became exceeding sorrowful even unto death, which had extorted the supplication of Gethsemane—its agony and

bloody sweat—which had been the weight of his cross and the bitterness of his passion—which had prompted the cry of temporary abandonment on the accursed tree, and given their measureless intensity to those sufferings at which the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and the earth trembled with its mute dismay—and the graves gave up the bodies of the saints which slept, and supernatural darkness closed around a guilty world. With what true and tender eloquence did he speak, towards the conclusion, of the pitiable situation in which the parents of the deaf and dumb are placed. He described the longing with which the mother watches for some sign that her little one hears her language of affection—the solicitude with which she listens to catch the slightest promise, that the gift of utterance has not been withheld—the struggles of maternal hope, that will not be cast down by the delay which subdues all other expectation—the hope deferred, which comes at length, and with it the heavy sickness of the heart—the blight and the bitterness which settle in her soul, when the desolating certainty can no longer be shut out, that the pleasant sounds of nature find no entrance to her infant's intellect, and that she is never to drink in the lisping prattle of her little one—of all melody the sweetest to a mother's ear. We are sensible that our memory enables us to do no justice even to the sentiments of the preacher, and much less have we succeeded in conveying any idea of his inimitable diction. Some months have elapsed since we heard this eloquent discourse, and we rather retain a recollection of the general effect, than an ability to describe the various matters by which it was produced.\* It seemed to give the highest satisfaction to the audience. The next pew to that into which we were inducted contained Mr. Lefroy, Sergeant Blackburne, and Mr. Crampton. We were somewhat curious to observe what effect the preacher seemed to produce upon these legal personages. Mr. Lefroy, in the early part of the service, had composed his features, naturally mild in their expression, into something of unnecessary severity, and looked as if he were determined not to be puffed up by his recent triumph over Wilson Croker. Afterwards, however, the brow cleared itself considerably, and the lips lost much of their compression, while he honoured many of the preacher's remarks with unequivocal symptoms of approval. What Sergeant Blackburne thought, we could not for the life of us conjecture. This personification of forensic frost maintained throughout, the formality of an act of Parliament. His countenance never lost the sober smugness of expression which it usually wears, and no shade of feeling altered, even for a moment, his calm but subtle eye. The franker temperament of Mr. Crampton, left no doubt of his participation in the delight which was universally experienced.

Mr. Crooke's appearance is decidedly prepossessing. His age would seem to be approaching thirty-five. His form is cast in massive and powerful proportions, and rises considerably above the middle size. Dark, regular, and manly features, which, though not "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," are of a decidedly intellectual cast, contribute to the preacher's external advantages. His voice is not of the best description; but there is no nauseous attempt to subdue its occasional harshness into any affected intonations. His enunciation, though rapid, is distinct; and his interesting and animated delivery is never disfigured by either mannerism or mouthing. There is more variety in Mr. Crooke's mode of preaching, than in that of any other divine with whom we are acquainted. The overwhelming earnestness which characterises

\* Since writing the above, we have heard with pleasure, that this admirable sermon is in course of publication.

the exhortory perorations of Mr. Pope, alone redeems his manner from that wearisome monotony which distinguishes the narrative and unimpassioned parts of his discourse. Mr. Croke's action is unusually striking—more particularly the free and unembarrassed movement of the right arm, than which no species of attempted gesture fails oftener in the execution, or is more effective when successful. He keeps his discourse written out before him, and occasionally consults it as he proceeds—though his forcible and extemporaneous manner might induce a casual observer to conclude that he was speaking without premeditation. We confess, that we approve of the plan which Mr. Croke adopts. Robert Hall, and a few other men of ready talent and long accumulated thought, may pour out upon the instant a species of eloquence almost perfect in its way; but the intellectual offspring of most persons require both time and care to bring them to maturity—and it is not from the head of every one, that wisdom can be expected to issue at once in her perfect stature, and clad in her immortal panoply, and armed with spear and shield. The style of Mr. Croke's discourses is of a very glowing and highly wrought description—and if his figurative language cannot claim at all times absolute originality, it is introduced and exhibited with unusual propriety. We have remarked a similarity to some of the best French models, and occasionally admired the polished phraseology of Bossuet, and still oftener the force and fire of Massillon's more masculine conceptions. We could readily imagine Mr. Croke addressing his auditory in the style of the latter's celebrated interrogatory concerning the number of the saved. His allusions to such incidents in sacred history as serve to illustrate his positions, are exquisitely appropriate; and we know no preacher who introduces with such felicity the noble and pathetic phraseology of Scripture. No overstrained sentiment or vulgar exaggeration, which the unskilful are so forward to admire, but which the judicious cannot look upon but with grief, deforms his unaffected composition. Mr. Croke, though clear in statement, is by no means argumentative in his sermons; and, in truth, the sturdy dialectician is rather out of his element in the pulpit. The age of metaphysical preaching has departed. No such sermons as Bishop Butler's will ever be heard again in England, even by the learned Society of Lincoln's Inn.

There seems to be a sufficiently palpable distinction between men of cleverness, men of talent, and men of genius. Mr. Urwick of York-street, who enjoys considerable popularity as a preacher, and who addresses a public meeting with spirit and effect, we should be inclined to classify amongst the clever men. Your first feeling on hearing this gentleman, is one of unmixed astonishment. How there can issue from so small a body such a mighty sound, is perfectly amazing. After a little time, you recover sufficiently to attend to the preacher's matter, which he pours out in plain, perspicuous sentences, with the most unhesitating volubility and self-possession. He "shaves with level wing" along his subject—never soaring into ether—never creeping on the ground. No "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" are to be met with in his composition;—the mysteries of the human mind must be laid open by a more profound hierophant;—he does not bear the prophet's rod, to smite successfully the heart of stone. Yet Mr. Urwick is a clear thinker, and, as we have already said, a clever man.

In looking for a man of genius, on the other hand, our thoughts turn themselves at once to the glory of the Scottish church—in our opinion, the most originally eloquent of living men—the prince of preachers—

Doctor Chalmers. It was our good fortune to be in London when this distinguished individual arrived from Scotland, to officiate at the opening of the commodious place of worship which Mr. Irving's congregation had recently erected. Mr. Irving commenced the service, in which his melo-dramatic deportment, forcible action, splendid voice, and oddity of idea, showed themselves worthy of the popularity into which, despite of much intellectual deficiency, they had elevated their possessor. When this gentleman, with the majestic step of self-importance, had descended from the pulpit, Dr. Chalmers walked quickly up the steps. The outward man was in every way contrasted with that of Mr. Irving. A low figure, altogether destitute of dignity—a head unadorned with the apostolic ringlets, which Mr. Irving cherishes with such anxiety and success—and a homely cast of features, of which something like quiet humour would seem to be the prevalent expression—were qualities not likely to recommend his appearance to an audience accustomed to look upon his former colleague. The superficial investigation of a public assembly could not be expected to discern the intellect that widens his expansive forehead, and reposes in his sleepy eye. We might look to find the Doctor in one of Wilkie's inimitable pieces; but Mr. Irving should be enrolled among the outlaws of *Salvator Rosa*. When the preacher commenced, there was an evident sensation of surprise and disappointment throughout the crowded congregation. His voice is thin, shrill, and incapable of modulation; his pronunciation so thoroughly northern as in a great measure to transcend all Cockney comprehension; and his gesture, which is confined to the right hand, (the left being constantly employed in the preservation of his place,) though animated, is unvaried. But these were only *Liliputian* bands, and could not keep the strong man down. When the preacher kindled with his subject—when his eye became lit up with a high-wrought enthusiasm—when he poured out those magnificent sentences, which would be verbose if they clothed the thoughts of any other man, but which barely cover his—we felt that "the mastery of mind" was not always a phrase destitute of meaning, and forgot for the moment that the person to whom we listened with such delight was far from being six feet high—that he wore his hair like any common man—and could not boast even the slightest approximation to a squint.

Some people may imagine that we need not have gone to Scotland in search of a preacher and a man of genius. We have heard the Rev. Nicholas Armstrong spoken of, as presenting these characters in a happy combination. When Mr. Grattan made his first speech in the English Parliament, the members were for some time unable to decide whether to laugh at or applaud the "sentimental harlequin," as Curran used to call him. In the same manner, we were obliged to hear Mr. Armstrong two or three times before we could make up our mind upon his merits. He discourses with surprising vehemence and volubility—preserves at a very high pitch a voice which seems occasionally to issue from his chest with difficulty—and, holding his right arm at full length, keeps continually describing with it small and rapid circles, which constitutes the entire of his confined, unpleasant action. His perpetual straining after strength of phrase is doomed to almost invariable failure; while his exaggerated manner approaches to a "tearing of the passion to tatters—to very rags." His admirers excuse these excesses, as the rioting of a luxuriant imagination. To us, on the contrary, they seem the unnatural efforts by which a feeble one endeavours to conceal its impotence. A partial eye may discern *Etna* struggling with its internal fire, and

evolving its lava torrent with terrific fervency ; but to us Mr. Armstrong appears no more than one of that species of volcano described by geographers, which mimic the mighty throes of the sublimer class, yet, after all, throw out little save smoke and mud. We think, notwithstanding, that Mr. Armstrong would hold a higher rank, if he were not so ambitious of the highest.

Of the intermediate order, the men of talent, we consider Mr. Crooke, to whom we have at length returned, a creditable representative.—Without the originality of thought which distinguishes the man of genius, he rises above the common-place plausibilities to which the clever man is restricted. Mind of this description is, perhaps, the most effective for popular purposes—it fires neither too high nor too low, but hits exactly between wind and water.

It will be observed, that we have confined ourselves to the *literary* merits of the different preachers we have mentioned—being of opinion, that with doctrinal matters a publication of this nature has no right to intermeddle. The Established Church, if we are to receive the interpretation of Bishop Horsely, throws open its portals to the widest difference of opinion concerning the Divine decrees, and invites the supralapsarian and Arminian to enter together. Keeping clear of this controversy, however, we would remark, in a purely expository spirit, that the doctrines looked upon by both parties as most important, are zealously enforced by the distinguished preacher whose name we have prefixed to these observations. P.

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\* \* Agreeing as we do in the leading views of our valuable correspondent—to whom we have been before indebted—we willingly insert his communication. There are, however, some of his incidental judgments for which we cannot hold ourselves responsible.—EDITOR.

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## THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

London, November 10, 1830.

DEAR EDITOR—Well, I thought that the day for the meeting of Parliament would never arrive, so tiptoe was my curiosity to see with my own eyes, and hear with my own ears, what I have been reading and dreaming about from my veriest boyhood. At length it did come, and (perhaps you will say, as a matter of course) I was disappointed. The House of Lords (imposing sound) turned out after all to be nothing better than a meeting of well-behaved undandified gentlemen—differing from the worshipful Court of Aldermen, chiefly in being more prim, prosy, stately, and, excuse the democracy of the expression, more yawn-generating ; while the House of Commons, with which I had associated so many thrilling historical recollections, was to the full, as noisy and disorderly, and as free from artificial dignity as a Court of Common Council.

When I entered the House of Lords on Tuesday last, I was, with about two hundred other lords of the creation, huddled up in a corner, where I positively could see nothing but the backs and plumes of the several peeresses and their daughters, who occupied the benches on both sides of the throne—so that all that I can tell you about the general aspect of the chamber is, that it is but a poor concern—notwithstanding its tapestry-history all about the Armada, which covers the walls—